

The Carolina DX Association

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The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

A Tale of Two Titans

By Don Daso, K4ZA

I thought perhaps a quick review of the contest breakdown of the Multi-Multi contestants from the ARRL CW DX contest might be of interest.

Granted, not everyone's going to have the hardware to support such an operation, and while it's often been suggested to me (even during days of yore, when N4ZC and I dipped our toes into these waters), that there's little planning or strategy required—just get on the air for the entire 48 hours! Yet, there are some skillsets at play here.

First and foremost, of course, is an acute knowledge of propagation. In these “woe is me” years of declining sunspots, it's vital that each operator know his/her band and its possible openings. Second is having hardware which will allow the operator to capitalize on that propagation. That means multiple antennas, orientable to different directions. And then, at last, it is relatively simple—all you need is some BIC (butt in chair) time.

Of course, we are here talking about W3LPL and K3LR, the perennial challengers for the top spot in USA Multi-Multi contest segment. W3LPL is in Glenwood, MD, and has been in the M-M category (CQWW & ARRL, both modes) over 150 times. K3LR is in West Middlesex, PA, only four miles from the Ohio border. Tim Duffy (K3LR) has done M-M a bit over 95 times.

Each station consists of multiple towers, holding multiple beams. There are 13 towers at K3LR; there are nine towers at W3LPL. Each uses a variety of the WA3FET OWA (Optimized Wide Band Array) design. Full details can be found on various webpages or simply review the write-ups on their respective QRZ pages.

Let's look at the numbers for W3LPL and K3LR from the contest:

(Continued on page 2)

Bands-W3LPL	QSOs	Mults
160	236	68
80	994	102
40	1835	119
20	2160	125
15	353	91
10	72	28

Bands-K3LR	QSOs	Mults
160	213	72
80	868	98
40	778	124
20	2143	127
15	372	81
10	77	31

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems

K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com
W4DXA (AR Cluster via Telnet)	w4dxa.no-ip.com
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600)	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdfa.org
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Skyland Family Restaurant, 4544 South Boulevard, Charlotte, NC

(Continued from page 1)

These numbers equate to just over 9 million points for W3LPL and 8.7 million for K3LR—a very close race (3%, which should hold up during log checking). Let's look at how the contest went. Frank and Tim are about 400 miles apart. Initially, you might consider that a level playing field, but as we approach the bottom of the sunspot cycle, that's no longer true, especially for N-S propagation. W3LPL had longer EU openings on every band but 10m. That equated to 340 more EU QSOs and 10 common EU Mults that K3LR did not work. K3LR typically beats W3LPL to Japan, and that was true in this contest. Yet, even their additional 120 JA QSOs were not enough to overcome the EU advantage W3LPL enjoyed.

With some last minute cancellations, I ended up operating on both 20m and 10m this time out. In a word, *whew* and *borrriiiinnnggg!* Some great rates on 20m and super tedium on 10m. But M-M is a TEAM effort, and one does what's needed. It's just that simple. Thankfully, each band allows for some sack time.

The second aspect of M-M operation is how to do it. And by that I mean just how do you operate two radios on the same band successfully? It's not that simple! At W3LPL, a mix of K3 & FTDX-5000 radios are used; at K3LR, IC-7851s are used at each position. Each station uses homebrew amps: W3LPL has six 3-1000Zs he built long ago, K3LR has 8877s at each position. Each station uses a lock-out system to prevent simultaneous transmission.

The days of the MULT op spinning the dial, glancing at a dupe sheet and then calling the necessary station, are long gone. Today, if you even look at the radio, you're likely losing time. Your eyes are on the monitor, which displays the logging program, which is connected to a

Skimmer and the PacketCluster, and also displays a bandmap (for CW). That's the lifeblood of the contest, as it shows you not only new (as yet unworked) stations, but any/all needed MULTs.

Then the only question becomes, how does the MULT op work said stations without disrupting the RUN operator's hopefully high QSO rate? This is where the operators knowing each other's style and rhythm is important, as well as being able to communicate quickly (calmly enough so as not to disturb the other station ops).

I've been operating at W3LPL since 1988, when I moved to MD to become Director of Production at UMCP's Dept. of Radio-TV-Film. I was pretty nervous about joining PVRC, as (at that time) one had to be sponsored or recommended even to be considered eligible for membership. All I had was a smattering of single op low power operation and the N4ZC experience. The PVRC guys were giants of contesting. But, I was warmly welcomed, and amazingly, was equal to the tasks asked of me. Turns out, Roger and I were doing things right, after all, albeit with our limited budget.

Over the years, I've operated every position, every mode, at Frank's station (but I prefer CW). I've done tower work there. I've built beams and put up/taken down numerous Beverages and circle arrays. I've enjoyed every minute of it, and hope to continue successfully operating there.

--K4ZA

The Pileup
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The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Yearly dues are \$25.00. A second licensed Amateur family member living in the same household can join for \$5.00 for a total family price of \$30.00 per year. The total price for 3 or more licensed family members living in the same household is only \$35.00 per year. All family members enjoy full member status. Dues are payable annually in December by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Cliff Wagoner, W3ZL
218 Ohenry Avenue
Davidson, NC 28036

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email at: jew53@cornell.edu.

DX King News

by
John Forbus, NV4A



Call	Class	Countries	Zones	Total
K5EK	Unlimited	210	38	248
W3GQ	Unlimited	130	32	162
W3OA	Unlimited	118	33	151
W4HG	Unlimited	118	30	148
K8YC	Unlimited	99	26	125
W1AJT	Unlimited	97	26	123
AA4SC	Unlimited	71	29	100

Republic of Congo, TN5R

CDXA member IN3ZNR “Brix” (aka WHØQ) and his group “DXfriends” (see www.dxfriends.com) will be operating from Republic of Congo (Africa) in March.



The license was issued with the requested callsign, TN5R. The long journey will start from Madrid, via Addis Ababa Ethiopia, Brazzaville capital of Republic of Congo and terminate at Pointe Noire.

Pointe Noire is a small city on the South Atlantic Ocean. The QTH will be

directly on the shore at Malonda Lodge, where there's a large garden for setting up all antennas. The team will operate four stations well equipped with amplifiers and consists of experienced DXers coming from Spain, France, Japan and Italy. TN5R will be on air from about 8 March until 20 March, operating on 10 meters to 160 meters. Operations on 60 meters are not allowed from TN. Modes activated will be CW, SSB and RTTY.

Brix reports the “DX Friends” deeply miss one of their members K3LP, David Collingham (SK), and they are dedicating this DXpedition to his memory.

Brix hopes to make contacts with many CDXA members, and to get in touch with them. His email is in3znr@gmail.com. Don't be surprised if he recognizes your callsign!

Below is a photo that Brix provided of the operating venue where the operation is taking place.



2018



FT8
Challenge

By John Forbus, NV4A

The 2018 CDXA FT8 Challenge numbers continue to grow. Feel free to jump in at any time!

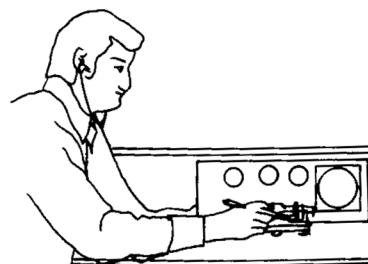
Dick, W3OA, developed a program to track the submitted FT8 Challenge scores. The program includes some logic to determine what it “thinks” of each QSO in your submitted log. If you're curious to see your results file, just email Dick at w3oa@roadrunner.com, and he'll send you a copy.

One more time, here's a reminder on where to find your WSJT-x logs and how to submit them:

WSJT-x logs are easily located within the WSJT-x program by going to “FILE—Open log directory”. In the log directory, you will see two log files: *wsjtx.log* is a Cabrillo log file and *wsjtx_log.adi* is the ADIF version of your log. Always, before submitting your log in ADIF format, copy the ADIF log to a separate directory of your choice, leaving the original log in place, and change the name of the “new” log file to “[YOUR CALL][DATE in Mo. Day format] *wsjtx_log.adi*”. For example, my log as of 05 February would be named: *NV4A 0205wsjtx_log.adi*. Once you have your log renamed, upload it to Drop Box at <https://tinyurl.com/y7lynkn8>.

Also, please make sure your submitted logs include *all* of your 2018 FT8 QSOs to date. Dick's program counts all the 2018 QSOs, NOT month by month, but the total for the year to date, which is what we'll be reporting in the Pileup each month.

At the top of the next page is a synopsis of the logs submitted through February 2018.



2018 FT8 Challenge Results as of End of February

Call	Grid	80m	40m	30m	20m	17m	15m	12m	10m	6m	All Bands
K5EK	FM03	296	255	229	472	330	93	6	11	0	1692
AA4R	EN64	62	219	261	314	418	213	40	19	0	1546
W3GQ	EM95	286	299	226	289	276	91	9	2	1	1479
K4GHS	EM96	130	141	279	190	326	187	9	4	0	1266
W3OA	EM95	186	314	207	386	75	72	10	7	5	1262
N4GBK	FM16	128	328	155	286	180	61	8	0	1	1147
W4JHU	EM85	47	85	53	67	67	17	0	0	0	336
W4GEH	EM95	30	115	25	45	27	10	0	0	0	252
W4LK	EM93	3	37	25	80	30	14	2	2	8	201
NV4A	EM95	6	42	51	45	7	0	0	0	0	151
WW4DD	EM94	40	50	8	13	0	0	0	0	0	111
N4APR	EM95	0	63	5	36	0	2	0	0	0	106
W4GHV	EM95	3	23	10	22	5	1	0	0	1	65
W4WNT	EM94	13	1	6	7	5	1	0	0	1	34

Charlotte Hamfest 2018

In the photo to the right, Paul Ponak (AD4IE) is the happy winner of the CDXA Hamfest Raffle and takes home a MFJ Graphic Analyzer for his “investment” in raffle tickets.



John Peay, W4PAY, cannot suppress his delight when President Paul Trotter presented a Yaesu gift certificate that will allow John to receive an FT-1200 or apply the certificate to a different radio of his choice.

2018 ARRL DX Contest Wrap Up

By John Forbus, NV4A

Another ARRL DX Contest is in the books. We announced the results and prize winners at the annual Hamfest Banquet at Texas Land and Cattle on Friday night, March 9th. We passed out the certificates and gift cards to all the winners who were present. Those who couldn't attend will receive their certificates and gift cards in the mail. Final, official, results will be available later in the year in QST and on the ARRL website, and will be summarized in the Pileup.

Our club's aggregate score continues its downward trend as propagation continues to get worse. Ten meters helped out a bit with some openings. This year our "raw" total score was a bit over 7.1 million points as opposed to last year's 15.5 million points, with only slightly less participation from our members than last year. We'll just have to wait and see how we did against other clubs. Remember that we base our club contest prizes on total Q's, not points. Our winners were:

Top combined score: K5EK, Ed: 2,080 Q's

Top CW score: K7BV, Dennis: 2,000 Q's

Top Phone score: W7DO, Gary: 725 Q's

Top CW Low Power score: W3ZL, Cliff: 125 Q's

Top Phone Low Power score: WA3DQS, Andy: 189 Q's

All of the above received a certificate and a \$50 gift card for any "Bloomin' Brands" restaurant.

Members who had 1000 or more contacts combined (CW and Phone) received certificates and \$25 gift cards. Winners were:

W3OA, Dick W3GQ, Paul

Members who completed 500 or more contacts combined (CW and Phone) were awarded a certificate and an entry in the raffle for a \$25 gift card. Winners were:

K2SD, Scott AA4V, Steve.

The only person in the "250-499 contacts" category was NV4A. As Contest Manager, my name didn't go in the raffle pot, leaving Scott and Steve with a 50/50 chance of winning. Not bad odds, and the \$25 gift card went to AA4V.

Thanks and congratulations to all our winners, and all who participated.

Awesome Computers

The computer is awesome
In the knowledge it stores,
In the facts and figures
It readily outpours.

It demands no pay raise,
Nor sign of affection;
It takes no days off,
Nor time for reflection.

It craves no coffee breaks,
A human eccentricity;
All it ever asks for
Is a little electricity.

—Arnold J. Zarett

(This is doubly true in the smartphone era. —Ed.)



Chew on This

Those who have had the
experience
Are the ones most likely to
know:
A man begins cutting his
wisdom teeth
The first time he has to eat
crow.

—George O. Ludcke

The Back Page

What's inside. . . .

What goes on in a **Multi-Multi contest station**? Don Daso, K4ZA, gives us an idea of what operating in a top notch Multi-Multi station entails. See Page 1.

Early results for the **2018 DX King Competition** are in on Page 2.

CDXA's Fabrizio Vedovelli, IN3ZNR, is on the air with the **TN5R DXpedition team** in the Congo NOW! Check out their operation on Page 3. The operation runs through March 20.

FT8 2018 Challenge is showing that a lot of members are using this new mode in a big way. See page 3.

See the winners of the **2018 Charlotte Hamfest awards** on Page 4.

Wrapup of the **club's 2018 ARRL International DX Contest competition** can be found on Page 5 in case you weren't at the Charlotte Hamfest. Congratulation to the winners.